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Hear-Say, Inference, Surprise: (Self-)Distancing in Bulgarian

Sonnenhauser, Barbara

Abstract: Using examples of perfect-like forms in Bulgarian, this paper probes the linguistic potential of the notion of ‘distance’. It is shown how this conceptual metaphor can be semantically grounded and contribute to a systematic analysis of the semantics and interpretational range of the forms in question. By the contextual specification of their semantic components, the possible interpretations of the respective forms can be derived in a straightforward way. This provides evidence for a polysemy-based approach instead of a paradigm- or homonymy-based analysis, which has been the favoured approach for these forms in the previous literature. Moreover, based on the notion of distance, text-level usage patterns can be accounted for.

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ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-111247>

Book Section

Published Version

Originally published at:

Sonnenhauser, Barbara (2015). Hear-Say, Inference, Surprise: (Self-)Distancing in Bulgarian. In: Sonnenhauser, Barbara; Meermann, Anastasia. Distance in language : grounding a metaphor. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 117-141.

The conceptual metaphor of distance plays a crucial role in current perceptions of the world and humans' various interactions within it. It hardly seems possible to conceptualize space and time, emotional involvement in events, and relationships with other people in terms other than "distance". As a consequence, this primarily spatial concept figures prominently in the verbal expression of these abstract notions, and is thus highly relevant for the analysis of linguistic phenomena. In recent decades, "distance" has been employed as a fruitful tool in different, primarily cognitive and functional, approaches. However, the explanatory power of this notion suffers from certain inconsistencies: On the one hand, very different linguistic phenomena are described in terms of "distance", while, on the other, the notion itself relates to disparate concepts.

By providing a thorough grounding of the metaphor of distance, the present volume makes this notion tangible and thus applicable in various domains of linguistic analysis. The contributions gathered in this volume provide a concise delimitation from neighbouring concepts, and explore the rich potential of this metaphor for the analysis of the semantics, usage conditions and discourse-pragmatic effects of both morpho-syntactic categories and syntactic structures. They also investigate the role of "distance" in understanding mechanisms of linguistic interaction. The languages covered in this volume include, amongst others, languages from the Germanic, Romance and Slavic families, as well as Japanese and Turkish.

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978-1-4438-7261-4
www.cambridgescholars.com
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oil on canvas by Caspar David Friedrich, 1810



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Distance in Language

Barbara Sonnenhauser
Anastasia Meermann

Distance in Language

Grounding a Metaphor



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This book first published 2015

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-7261-X

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-7261-4

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CHAPTER FIVE

HEAR-SAY, INFERENCE, SURPRISE: (SELF-) DISTANCING IN BULGARIAN*

BARBARA SONNENHAUSER

Abstract

Using examples of perfect-like forms in Bulgarian, this paper probes the linguistic potential of the notion of ‘distance’. It is shown how this conceptual metaphor can be semantically grounded and contribute to a systematic analysis of the semantics and interpretational range of the forms in question. By the contextual specification of their semantic components, the possible interpretations of the respective forms can be derived in a straightforward way. This provides evidence for a polysemy-based approach instead of a paradigm- or homonymy-based analysis, which has been the favoured approach for these forms in the previous literature. Moreover, based on the notion of distance, text-level usage patterns can be accounted for.

1. Introduction

The present paper aims at describing the semantics and interpretational range of perfect-like forms in Bulgarian. These forms consist of the auxiliary ‘to be’ and the past active participle, the so-called ‘*l*-participle’. In Bulgarian, the auxiliary *sām* may be omitted in the third person, as illustrated in (1) with *piša* ‘to write’:

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| (1) | 1sg | pisal sām | 1pl | pisali sme |
| | 2sg | pisal si | 2pl | pisali ste |
| | 3sg | pisal e / Ø | 3pl | pisali sa / Ø |

* The research for this paper has been funded by the German Research Foundation DFG (project ‘Perspectivity in Balkan Slavic: semantic basis and discourse pragmatic relevance’, SO 949/2–1).

Assuming context-dependency calls for the specification of a semantic basis underlying the different interpretations. One suggestion towards a unifying analysis consists in assuming ‘distance’ to be the common denominator (e.g. Fielder 1996; Topolinjska 2009), which manifests itself to different ‘degrees’, e.g. as non-confirmation, hear-say, doubt or irony (Guentchéva 1996). This in turn raises the question how these degrees of distance can be captured more precisely and which factors contribute to their specification.

The notion of distance will also be central to the analysis of Bulgarian *l*-forms proposed in this paper. Taking Dancygier and Vandelanotte’s (2009, 326) conception of distance as implying at least two spatial locations separated by a space and being perceived by an observing entity as a starting point, it will be illustrated in which way the *l*-forms can be described in terms of distance, i.e. in which sense this notion can be semantically grounded. Moreover, it will be sketched how this semantic basis is contextually specified and yields the various interpretations that are traditionally regarded as distinct paradigms. Finally, the functional relevance of distance on the text level will be pointed out.

To begin with, section 2 introduces the forms in question in more detail, as well as the problems they pose for linguistic analyses.

2. The *l*-forms

As has been indicated by (1), the *l*-forms are composed of the ‘*l*-participle’ and the auxiliary ‘to be’, which may be omitted in the 3rd person. By this omission, the so-called renarrative is assumed to differ from the perfect. Another distinctive factor concerns the possibility of forming the *l*-participle from the imperfect-stem, which is assumed to be impossible for the exclusively aorist-based perfect. However, since imperfect-based *l*-participles do appear with the 3rd person auxiliary, one further paradigm is postulated: that of the ‘conclusive’. Table 1 gives an overview of these paradigms:

	perfect	renarrative	conclusive		
	aorist	aorist	imperfect	imperfect	aorist
1sg	pisal sām	pisal sām	pišel sām	pišel sām	pisal sām
3sg	pisal e	pisal Ø	pišel Ø	pišel e	pisal e
1pl	pisali sme	pisali sme	pišeli sme	pišeli sme	pisali sme
3pl	pisali sa	pisali Ø	pišeli Ø	pišeli sa	pisali sa

Table 1. Paradigms postulated for the *l*-forms

In addition, there is one further verbal construction based on the *l*-participle, whose status as either a separate paradigm or a transposed usage of one of the others is still being disputed—the so-called admirative, which serves to express surprise (for an overview of the paradigms cf. Nicolova 2008, for more details on the admirative cf. Aleksova 2003). Examples for these different manifestations of the *l*-form are given in (4)–(7).

The usage of *săm jal* ‘I have eaten’ in (4) asserts the experience of having eaten a similar chop before. This is one of the typical functions of the perfect:

(4) perfect

A: Čičo Koki, takava pāržola može i da *săm jal* njakoga, ama ne si spomnjam. [...]

B: Na vašata vila *si jal* takava pāržola. (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 139)

‘A: Uncle Koki, it might be that I *have eaten* such a chop before, but I don’t remember.

B: At your dacha you *have eaten* such chop.’

An example for the conclusive is given in (5). Here, the *l*-forms indicate that the sitting and writing is inferred from some conclusive evidence, as triggered by *izgležda* ‘[it] appears’:

(5) conclusive

Izgležda, kogato se e počukalo na vratata, toj *e sedjal* i *e pišel*.

‘It appears that when a knock came at the door he’d *been sitting* there and *writing*.’ (Alexander and Zhobov 2009, 68)

The *l*-form *započnal* in (6) is a typical example of the renarrative. The beginning of negotiations is presented not as a fact but as being based on rumors:

(6) renarrative

Luka Toni *Ø započnal* pregovori s Roma (<http://topsport.ibox.bg>, 27.11.2009)

‘[It is said that] Luca Toni *started* negotiations with Roma.’

The admirative is exemplified in (7). By using the *l*-form, the speaker expresses her surprise about the addressee’s behavior:

(7) admirative

Ništo njama be, čovek! Kakvo *si se zajal*?! (Alek Popov, *Misija London*)

‘Nothing’s wrong, man! What *are you arguing about*?!’

There is one further usage of the *l*-forms, that is only rarely mentioned in the literature: the expression of irony. B’s answer in (8) has an ironical flavor due to the use of the *l*-form without the 3rd person auxiliary—otherwise, i.e. by using another form such as the aorist, it would emerge as a plain question:

(8) irony

A: [...] Nie prosto složixme tam dve stolčeta do palatkata, gledaxme zvezdite ...

B: A-a, te *šibili* do samata palatka? (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 29)

‘A: We simply put there two little chairs beside the tent, looked at the stars ...

B: A-a, they *were* right beside the tent?’

As can be seen from these examples, the perfect, renarrative, conclusive and admirative, as well as the expression of irony, are barely distinguished on a morphological basis. This raises the question as to whether these forms should indeed be analyzed as instantiating different paradigms and, consequently, different grammatical categories. Another possible way of approaching the *l*-forms may be to capture the different interpretations as being derived from one common semantic basis, i.e. regard them an instance of polysemy.

3. The same but different

Linguistic entities that are formally identical but differ on the content side may be instances of homonymy or polysemy. Oversimplifying a bit, prototypical homonymous forms are identical in form only by chance: they have different etymological origins and their meanings are unrelated (e.g. Lyons 1977). Prototypical polysemious forms are identical in form because they are etymologically related and this etymological relationship is still visible from a synchronic point of view—it is therefore not correct, in a strict sense, to speak of ‘different forms’. Rather, one form is assigned various interpretations that can be motivated one by the other. In the case of homonymy we are dealing with different semantically coded meanings that can be enumerated in form of a list, whereas polysemy is

characterized by different contextually triggered senses that are computed online and cannot be definitely listed. This difference is relevant for the analysis of the *l*-forms as well: assuming different paradigms for the various interpretations of the *l*-forms amounts to postulating homonymy, whereas assuming one and the same paradigm underlying the different manifestations suggests polysemy.

3.1 Homonymy

Analysing the *l*-forms as constituting different paradigms is to regard their interpretations as semantically coded meanings of different forms that simply look similar. This homonymy should then be resolved in the linguistic context, yielding exactly one possible meaning for the form in question: perfect, renarrative, conclusive or admirative. Examples (4)–(8) seem to fulfil this prediction. However, examples (2)–(3) are far from clear: (2a) allows for two interpretations, the difference between (2b) and (2c) is one of intonation. The same holds for (3a) vs. (3b). There is no lexical difference, rather, the predicate *si bil* is part of two different sentence modes, and it is this interaction with sentence mode—declarative and exclamative—that yields the perfect and the admirative interpretation respectively. In (9), only the larger contexts might help to differentiate between perfect (‘has been’) and admirative (‘is’) interpretation for *e bila*:

- (9) Marija [...]: Ox! Tova li *e bila* tvoja sārdečna ljubov kām mene?
(Vasil Drumev. *Ivanko, ubiečāt na Asenja I*)
‘Marija: Alas! This *has been* / *is* your sincere love towards me?’

The *l*-form *se vārnal* ‘has returned’ in (10) seems to be a prime example for a renarrative, being lexically triggered by *novinata* ‘the news’ as the primary source of information. However, as the conversation goes on, this meaning is overridden by Mark Avrelij’s statement that he has talked to Baj Ganju in person (*az go vidjax, govorex s nego* ‘I saw him, talked to him’). By this personal evidence a renarrative interpretation is excluded and an admirative one becomes more plausible. This is also supported by the exclamative flavor of the utterance containing *se vārnal*:

- (10) – Čuxte li novinata?—izvika Mark Avrelij [...]
– Kakva novina?—obadixme se vsički.
– Baj Ganju *se vārnal* ot Evropa!
– Ne može da bāde!
– Kak „ne može da bāde“, be, gospoda, az go vidjax, govorex s nego. (Aleko Konstantinov, *Baj Ganju*)

- ‘Did you hear the news?—shouted Mark Avrelj.
- Which news?—we all said.
- Baj Ganju *has returned* from Europe!
- Impossible!
- How, “impossible”, I saw him, talked to him.’

Similar examples can be found in Macedonian, which is closely related to Bulgarian. For (11), three interpretations—perfect, conclusive and admiring—are possible for *se razbudil* ‘he has woken up’. It is, however, questionable, whether the communicative success indeed depends upon the hearer’s decision for exactly one, and only one, of these possibilities:¹

- (11) A (Sluša.): Psst, mi se čini krevetot krcna!
 B: Krcna?
 A: Se protegnuva!
 B: Se protegnuva?
 A: Se prodzeva!
 B: Se prodzeva?
 A: *Se razbudil!*
 B: Se razbudil? (Vasil Iljoski, *Čorbadži Teodos*)
 ‘A (Listens): Psst, the bed seems to creak.
 B: Creak?
 A: He is stretching!
 B: He is stretching?
 A: He is yawning!
 B: He is yawning?
 A: *He has woken up!*
 B: He has woken up?’

The dependency of interpretations on the type of speech-act, the contextually conditioned overriding of interpretations and the oscillation between different interpretations speak against the assumption of homonymy for the *l*-forms. In addition, homonymy is also implausible

¹ This assumption is basic to the relevance theoretic account of the comprehension procedure, which Wilson and Sperber (2004, 613) summarize as follows:

- a. Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses (disambiguations, reference resolutions, implicatures, etc.) in order of accessibility.
- b. Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied (or abandoned).

from a diachronic point of view. The forms in question are historically related and the formal variation concerning \pm auxiliary and aorist/imperfect basis is fairly young (cf., e.g. Ivančev 1978[1976]). Moreover, the variation regarding the (non-)usage of the 3rd person auxiliary is part of a common Slavic development of the *l*-forms. This development has resulted in the complete loss of the auxiliary in some Slavic languages (e.g. Russian), while in others it has been preserved in all persons (e.g. Slovene). One further possible development was its loss only in the third person, as in Czech or Macedonian (cf. Dickey 2013 for an overview; Meermann, this volume, for Serbian). The specific Bulgarian feature consists in the conservation of this variation of absence vs. presence in the third persons and its functionalisation.²

Given the semantic aspects and the diachronic development, a unified analysis in terms of polysemy seems more appropriate than one in terms of homonymy and different paradigms.

3.2 Polysemy

As has been pointed out in section 2, an alternative to the paradigm-based approach consists in regarding perfect, renarrative, conclusive and admirative not as clearly distinct meanings associated with different forms, but as interpretations of one and the same underlying form. Even though not explicitly referred to as ‘polysemy’, this possibility has already been suggested in the literature. Ivančev (1978[1976]) assumes a ‘perfect-like complex’ for the different semantic and formal variants of the *l*-forms. Friedman (1982) speaks of ‘transitional usages’ and ‘stylistic variants’, Guentchéva (1990) regards the different interpretations of the *l*-forms as forming a ‘meaning continuum’ and Alexander (2001) subsumes them under a ‘generalised past’. Polysemy presupposes that the different interpretations are related to each other. The etymological relationship between the perfect, renarrative, conclusive and admirative concerning the morphological structure has been briefly pointed out in section 3.1. As regards their interpretational range, D’omina (1970) shows that in Balkan Slavic documents dating from the 17th–18th century the admirative and conclusive interpretations of the *l*-forms develop later than the renarrative,

² Cf. Fielder (1999) for the diachronic development of this variation and the influence of the time of standardization on its shape in the contemporary standard languages (functional variation in Bulgarian, obligatory omission in Macedonian, obligatory presence in Serbian), and Sonnenhauser (2014b) for a more detailed description of its functional interpretation in pre-standardized Balkan Slavic texts dating from the late 18th–early 19th century.

which is in turn based on the perfect interpretation.³ Trummer (1971) shows that in Middle Bulgarian texts from the 14th–16th centuries the feature ‘unwitnessed’, which is crucial for the renarrative forms, arises from the ‘indeterminateness’ of the perfect concerning the event conveyed (1971, 62). The nuance ‘unwitnessed’ is contextually triggered and does not constitute an inherent feature of the forms in question.

Within a polysemy-account, perfect, renarrative, conclusive and admirative are not analysed as constituting different paradigms, which are formally and semantically definable. Rather, they are considered to be possible specifications of a common semantic basis. This is in line with Friedman (2003, 93), who emphasises that “Bulgarian auxiliary omission is neither paradigm-forming nor conditioned by the source of information”.

In the literature, the concept of ‘distance’ has occasionally been proposed as a common semantic basis, whereby two conceptions can be observed. The first refers to the distance between speaker/narrator and predication/narration. Based on this understanding of distance, Lunt (1952, 91) analyses the Macedonian *l*-forms as showing “an action viewed as distanced in time or reality”. Fielder (1995) assumes that the *l*-forms are related to the expression of distance between narrator and narration. Topolinjska (2009) regards them as part of a semantic category of ‘distance’. This semantic category is interesting insofar, as Topolinjska assumes that it comprises evidential (more precisely: non-witnessed) and admirative values. The relation between evidentiality—which is also used as a cover term for renarrative—and admirativity is highly controversial. Plungjan (2001, 355), for instance, points out that the “[a]dmirative value [...] is not evidential”, acknowledging at the same time “the recurrent polysemy of admirative and inferential and/or quotative markers [which] needs an explanation”. In order for the polysemy approach to be convincing, it should also provide an explanation for the relation between these—allegedly—incompatible interpretations of the *l*-forms.

The second conception of distance concerns distance ‘within’ speakers. This is proposed, e.g., by Lazard (1999) in his discussion of mirativity. He regards mirativity as the mediated expression of facts with different implications: hearsay implies ‘as I hear’, inference implies ‘as I infer’ and unexpected perception implies ‘as I see’. The crucial point is that in all these cases “[s]peakers are somehow split into two persons, the one who speaks and the one who has heard or infers or perceives” (Lazard 1999,

³ Note that this is based on the written language. Even though the documents investigated in D’omina (1970) are basically vernacular, they cannot be taken to represent precise characteristics of the language ‘in general’ of that time.

95). In order to widen this analysis to contexts without a real speaker, such as narrations (cf. also section 5), it is more appropriate to speak of ‘anchoring instance’ instead of ‘speaker’. This anchoring instance, i.e. the observer, may itself be split and correspond both to ‘the one who speaks’ and ‘the one who perceives’.

The discussion in this section suggests that ‘distance’ may very well constitute the possible common denominator underlying the different interpretations of the *l*-forms. However, simply postulating distance as the basis for the polysemy encountered remains vague. What is still needed is a semantic justification, i.e. the semantic grounding of this metaphorical notion. This semantic grounding should in turn provide the basis for a well-defined derivation of the perfect, renarrative, conclusive, admirative and also ironic interpretations of the *l*-forms and at the same time show that they are semantically related.

4. Distance

The notion of ‘distance’ is metaphorical. Metaphors relate a (concrete) source domain to some (abstract) target domain in order to arrive at a more precise understanding of the latter. If there appear to be no corresponding structures in the target domain, the application of a metaphor grasps at nothing and is devoid of any descriptive value. In this section, it will be investigated whether linguistic correlates for the conceptual components of the source domain ‘distance’ can be found.

4.1 Semantic basis: coding of distance

In order to verify whether the assumption of distance as an underlying principle does indeed wield any explanatory power, it is necessary to investigate whether it can be semantically grounded. This requires a thorough semantic description of the *l*-forms, taking into account the contributions of the *l*-participle and the auxiliary. In doing so, the following semantic components have to be discriminated (cf. Sonnenhauser 2012, 2014a; see also Izvorski 1997): a state connected⁴ to some previous event (expressed by the *l*-participle), the time of utterance *TU* (related to

⁴ ‘Connected state’ does not require this state to be conditioned by the event preceding it. Connected states include resultant or consequent states but are not restricted to them. This captures the fact that the *l*-forms are not confined to telic or inherently bounded events as was the case in earlier stages of Slavic (already in Old Church Slavonic it can be observed that *l*-forms are formed also from ‘durative’ verbs, as noted, e.g. by Trost 1972).

the narrator) and the time, the assertion is made about—the topic time TT . Based on these components, the semantics of the l -forms can be formulated as the assertion of a connected state CS that holds at a topic time TT : $TT(CS)$. The contribution of the auxiliary consists in relating $TT(CS)$ to TU . In order to capture the variation of the third-person auxiliary, one additional factor has to be taken into account: the position of an observer O . The observer's position is included in the topic time ($O \subseteq TT(CS)$), i.e. it is the observer's position to which the assertion of the connected state is anchored. At the same time, the observer O —and with it the assertion of the connected state $TT(CS)$ —may be included in or excluded from the time of utterance TU , i.e. ($O \subseteq TU$) or ($O \not\subseteq TU$). This differentiation is related to the presence or absence of the auxiliary.

The semantics of the l -forms can be summarized as in (12), which reads as follows: what is asserted at TT is not the event itself, but a state connected to it. This assertion is anchored to an observer, which is included in TT , but not necessarily in TU . Thereby, the assertion is anchored to the narrator and her time of utterance ($O \subseteq TU$), or someone else's time of utterance ($O \not\subseteq TU$), such as that of a character in the text or of some unspecified non-narrator.

$$(12) [e \not\subseteq TT \ \& \ CS(e) \subseteq TT] \ \& \ [O \subseteq TT(CS)] \ \& \ [O \subseteq TU \vee O \not\subseteq TU]$$

The semantic description of the l -forms sketched in (12) involves two relations which are important for the discussion of distance: that between the event and the connected state as related to the observer's standpoint, $O-(e-CS)$, and that between the observer's standpoint and the time of utterance, $O-TU$. In this latter relation, the observer may be split up and fulfill two functions at once: narrator and non-narrator. Both relations provide the basis for the two kinds of distance mentioned above: that between observer and narration and that within the observer.⁵

In its literal sense, 'distance' as introduced and elaborated on by Dancygier and Vandelanotte (2009, 326), refers to two locations A and B that are separated by an additional space between them. These locations and the space in-between are noticed by an observer, who is aligned with A or B and thereby adds directionality. Instead of 'distance between A and B', which is a biangular concept, 'distance from A to B' is relevant, which is—because of the presupposed viewpoint—triangular (cf. Zeman, this volume). As a consequence, 'distance from A to B' and 'distance from B

⁵ Guentchéva (1996, 67) also takes the 'double nature of the perfect' as basic to its distancing functions. However, she focuses on the mutual conditioning of e and CS only.

to A' are not necessarily identical.

These source domain components can now be mapped onto the target domain, i.e. the *l*-forms and their semantic description as given in (12). Here, two types of distance can be distinguished, which are based on different locations and different spaces in between. The two locations *A* and *B*, which fix the distance, correspond to $O-(e-CS)$ on the one hand, and to $O-TU$ on the other. That is, one type of distance to be measured for the *l*-forms holds between the event and its connected state as observed from O .⁶ The other type of distance emerges for the relation between O and TU if the observer is split. This split is observed from a higher-level observer, which imposes directionality on the relation between the two instantiations of O (cf. Zeman, this volume, on the recursivity of distance). For the *l*-forms, the higher-level observer may be provided by the actual speaking instance. This makes this type of distance close to meta-commentaries as examples of the interpretive usage of language (cf. section 5.2).

The two types of distance between *A* and *B* (e.g. *e* and CS ; and O and TU) are based on different kinds of space between both points: one is information-based (for $O-(e-CS)$), the other knowledge-based (for $O-TU$) (cf. Akatsuka 1985 on these two notions and their relevance for linguistics). Directionality as induced by the observer's standpoint has its linguistic counterparts in reasoning processes that specify the way in which *e* is accessed from CS , and in which way narrator and non-narrator are related in the case of a split observer. The relevant processes are inference and presupposition, assertion and entailment, which all play a decisive role in the interpretation of the *l*-forms as renarrative, conclusive, perfect or admorative.

Table 2 summarizes the source domain components and their corresponding components in the *l*-forms as the target domain:

source domain: spatial distance	target domain: <i>l</i> -forms
two locations (<i>A</i> and <i>B</i>)	<i>e</i> and CS ; O and TU
observer (aligned with <i>A</i> or <i>B</i>)	(non-)narrator, character
space (between <i>A</i> and <i>B</i>)	information, knowledge
directionality ($A \rightarrow B$, $A \leftarrow B$)	inference, presupposition; assertion, entailment

Table 2. Components of distance and their application to *l*-forms

⁶ The observer O may in principle be aligned with *e* or CS . For the *l*-forms it is aligned with CS in any case and imposes directionality onto $e-CS$.

Having sketched how the metaphor of distance can be semantically grounded its role in the interpretation of the *l*-forms needs to be looked at, i.e. in the derivation of the various interpretations from this semantic basis.

4.2 Contextual specification: interpretation of distance

In the course of interpretation, the semantic components of distance as given in Table 2 are further specified by their immediate and larger context. The way these components are modified for the perfect, conclusive, renarrative, admirative and ironic interpretations will be shown in this section.

The constellation for the perfect is given in (13a): the relation between the event and the connected state is one of assertion, the observer's standpoint is included in the time of utterance. An example for this constellation is given in (13b), where the effect of forgetting—i.e. the connected state of the fork not being there—is asserted to hold at the narrator's time of utterance:

- (13) perfect
- a. semantics

event	—	connected state
asserted		asserted
$O \subseteq TU$, observer = narrator		
 - b. A: Vilica...
 B: Pak li *săm zabravila*? (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 42)
 'A: Fork ...
 B: *Have I forgotten* it again?'

The configuration for the conclusive interpretation differs from the perfect configuration in that the event is inferred from the connected state, cf. (14a). That is, perfect and conclusive are distinguished in terms of directionality. This is illustrated in (14b): The fact that Ivan's suitcase is not in the corridor (where it was supposed to be) constitutes the connected state from which Ivan's leaving is inferred. As with the perfect, the observer is included in the narrator's time of utterance.

- (14) conclusive
- a. semantics

e	←	connected state
inferred		asserted
$O \subseteq TU$, observer = narrator		

- b. Ivan *e zaminal*. Kufarăt mu ne e v koridora. (Nicolova 2006, 31)
 ‘Ivan *has left*. His suitcase is not in the corridor.’

In the case of the renarrative, the connected state is asserted as being based on a previous event. Contrary to the perfect, this previous event is not—or rather: cannot be—asserted, there is no commitment as regards its factivity. The standpoint of the observer is not included in the narrator’s time of utterance; the assertion is anchored to an observer different from the narrator. This configuration is given in (15a) and illustrated in (15b): the usage of the –aux-forms *bil izvesten* ‘lit.: has been known’ and *ne izpolzuvail banjata* ‘lit.: has not used the bathroom’ indicates that the narrator ascribes the statements to some other observer, an observer who is not further specified in this case (i.e. a non-narrator):

(15) renarrative

- a. semantics
 e → connected state
 ±asserted asserted
 TO \nsubseteq TU, observer \neq narrator
- b. I toj *bil izvesten* s tova, če [...] za cjaloto vreme *ne izpolzuvail* banjata [...] (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 267)
 ‘He *is said to be known* for *not washing* himself the whole time.’

In the case of the admirative, cf. (16), the event preceding the connected state is logically entailed—being surprised about some fact or event requires this fact or event to have taken place. Here, the standpoint of the observer is not included in the narrators time of utterance ($O \nsubseteq TU$). At the same time, the observer corresponds to the narrator. This seeming contradiction arises from the split of the observer, who assumes two different roles: that of the narrator and that of a non-narrator. This split gives rise to a knowledge-based distance which in turn is basic to a surprise interpretation, i.e. a clash of expectation and observation. Directionality targets from narrator to non-narrator, presenting the narrator’s statement as ‘foreign’, i.e. as being that of a non-narrator. This constellation is visible in (16b), where A indicates that having a lot of money does not correspond to his previous beliefs. Using the aorist instead would assert that he was a rich man in the past, using the *I*-form without the exclamative intonation would induce a perfect interpretation:

(16) admirative

- a. semantics
 - e – connected state
 - entailed asserted
 - $O \subseteq TU$, observer = narrator (self-distancing)
- b. B: Čakaj de! Dvesta ti dadoch ...
 A: Ej znači, az *săm imal* mnogo pari ...
 (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 93)
 ‘B: Hey, wait! I gave you two hundred ...
 A: Hey, this means that *I have* a lot of money ...’

Furthermore, the usage of an *I*-form instead of another form may trigger an ironic interpretation for a specific utterance. Here, both the event and its connected state are asserted to hold. The observer’s standpoint is included in the narrator’s time of utterance ($O \subseteq TU$), and at the same time corresponds to a non-narrator, cf. (17a). As with the admirative, this contradictory configuration can be explained by a split: the narrator includes a non-narrator’s utterance in his own while at the same time disapproving it. This is basic to the ‘echoing’ function of irony, whereby “the speaker (generally tacitly) expresses one of a range of dissociative attitudes (scepticism, mockery, rejection, etc.) to a (generally tacitly) attributed utterance or thought” (Wilson 2006, 1730). An example is given in (17b), where D takes up A’s question to Buč whether he is looking for tunnels in the cake and the answer B puts into Buč’s mouth. Thereby, D takes over this answer thereby echoing it. By using the –aux form *bilo*, D at the same time distances himself from it in a scoffing attitude.

(17) irony

- a. semantics
 - e – CS
 - asserted asserted
 - $O \subseteq TU$, observer \neq narrator (echoing)
- b. A: Buč, ti tuneli li tăršiš v taja torta, ta zaljagaš taka!
 B: Metro...
 C: ā-ā [...]
 D: Eto, kāde *bilo* Sofijskoto metro! ... (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 42)
 ‘A: Buč, are you looking for tunnels in that cake,
 B: Underground ...
 C: Ahh ...
 D: Ah, there *is* the Sofia underground! ...’

Examples (13)–(17) have shown how the specifications of the basic components of distance coded by the *l*-forms (cf. table 2) lead to the various interpretations mentioned in the literature. These specifications are summarized in table 3. As will be shown in section 5.2, by the split of the observer, admirative and irony can be grouped together as instances of interpretive (instead of descriptive) usage of language.

locations and relations		relevant space	direction	observer	inter-pretation
e-CS	$O \subseteq TU$	information	—	narrator	perfect
e-CS	$O \subseteq TU$	information	←	narrator	conclusive
e-CS	$O \not\subseteq TU$	information	→	non-narrator	renarrative
e-CS	$O \not\subseteq TU$	knowledge	→	narrator/non-narrator	admirative
e-CS	$O \subseteq TU$	knowledge	←	narrator/non-narrator	irony

Table 3. Components of distance and their specification

As the analysis proposed in this section has shown, the notion of distance indeed displays explanatory power. It is suited to capture both the semantics and the various interpretations of the *l*-forms. These interpretations can be derived in a predictable way from the contextual specification of the basic components of distance. There is thus no need to postulate separate grammatical paradigms for the different manifestations of the *l*-forms.

In addition to its advantages in describing the semantics of the *l*-forms and their interpretations, the notion of ‘distance’ can also be employed in order to account for the text-level usage patterns of the *l*-forms, as will be shown in section 5.

5. Functional relevance

The distance component is not only basic to the interpretation of the *l*-forms, it also underlies specific discourse effects emerging from the usage of these forms. Among those discourse effects is the fore- and back-grounding of narration effect as pointed out by Fielder (1995), which has already been referred to in section 2. Another important and closely related effect is that of introducing points of view. This emerges from the specification of the observer to which the information is anchored and thereby perspectivised. Moreover, the distance-based approach accounts for discourse-conditioned restrictions on the interpretation of these forms.

5.1 Perspectival anchoring

Friedman (2003, 93) points out that in East Bulgarian, which is the basis for the contemporary standard language, “the auxiliary is manipulated to render narrative perspective”. This can be accounted for within the distance-based analysis proposed here. As has been shown in section 4, the *l*-forms report events in a mediated way, in that an observer is aligned with the connected state but not to the event itself. Crucial on the text level is the specification of the observer, i.e. the instance to which the narration is anchored. There are three main options for this instance: narrator, character in the text and some unspecified non-narrator.

An example is provided in (18), where several *l*-forms, given in italics (*počinal*, *vārnal se*, *raztovaril* and *vārzal*), alternate with aorist forms, which are underlined (*se raznese*, *ne povjarva*, *razpravi*, *se uverixa*, *ne se šeguva*). Whereas the aorist forms render the events in their sequence, the *l*-forms explicitly anchor them to an observer’s point of view. The –aux-forms suggest that the observer does not coincide with the narrator. For *počinal*, this non-narrator is left unspecified: Grandpa Matejko’s death is reported from a non-narrator’s point of view. For the other –aux-forms, the observer is specified as Grandma Jova, i.e. as a specific character in the text. The most probable interpretation for these –aux-forms seems the renarrative one.

- (18) Kogato se raznese iz selo novinata, če djado Matejko *počinal*—nikoj ne povjarva [...]. Ala kogato baba Jova *razpravi* za poslednja mu čas, vsički se uverixa, če toja pāt toj ne se šeguva. *Vārnal se* čovekāt ot dārva, *raztovaril* magarenceto si, *vārzal* go, [...] (Elin Pelin, *Na onja svjat*)

‘When the news spread in the village, that grandfather Matejko *had died*—nobody believed it. But when grandmother Jova told about his last hour, everybody was convinced that this time he was not joking. The man *had returned* from the woods, *had unloaded* his donkey, *had tied* it.’

L-forms without the 3rd person auxiliary can also be found in newspaper reports. A typical example is given in (19): The +aux-form *e bila* (*bīta i obrana*) ‘has been (beaten and wounded)’ is used as a perfect and emphasises the current relevance of the event at the time of utterance. That is, with this +aux-form, *O* is included in *TU*, i.e. the time of narration specified by the aorist *sāobštixa* ‘(they) reported’. What follows is a sequence of –aux-forms that depict the beating-event in all its details. The basic function of –aux-forms in these contexts is not necessarily to

renarrate but mainly to anchor the narration to some non-narrator. Thereby, the narration is foregrounded, while the narrating instance remains in the background (cf. Fielder 1995), which allows for the detailed elaboration of the main event ('beating' in this case).⁷

- (19) 75-godišna žena ot selo Svoboda *e bila bita* i obrana ot dve momčeta v doma si, *sāobštixa* ot plicijata v Stara Zagora.

Decata *naxluli* v kăštata na staricata, *nanesli* i njakolko udara v korema i *otkradnali* 70 stotinki. Policaite bārzo *xvanali* malkite grabiteli, kato *se okazalo*, če tova sa dve momčeta na 11 i 12 godini ot săštoto selo. (www.trud.bg, 21.2.2014)

'A 75 year old women from the village Svoboda was beaten and wounded by two boys in her house, reported the police in Stara Zagora.

The children *broke into* the house of the elder women, hit her several times into the stomach and *stole* 70 stotinki. The police quickly *caught* the little thieves, as it *turned out* that these are two boys of 11 and 12 years age from the same village.'

The usage of 'renarrative' forms is regarded as stylistically inappropriate in newspaper texts (e.g. Nicolova 2001; Comati 2005), which is ascribed to the alleged 'vernacular' character of –aux-forms. As has been argued in Sonnenhauser (2014b), this 'inappropriateness' can be given a more solid explanation, if the semantics of these forms and the genre characteristics of the respective texts are taken into account: *l*-forms introduce an explicit point of view and this does not fit the readers' expectations of newspaper texts, which are assumed to simply report events without introducing any point of view. Unsurprisingly, *l*-forms without the auxiliary appear predominantly in newspaper texts reporting crimes and blood and thunder stories.

The usage of *l*-forms is also characteristic of reported speech constructions. Here, they display their anchoring function very clearly and illustrate the relevance of the presence/absence of the 3rd person auxiliary. The +aux-form *sa imali* 'have had' in (20) anchors the report to the narrator. Actually, this constitutes a short summary by the narrator of the complete text given after *tekstāt glasi* 'the texts says':

⁷ This pattern—introduction of the main event by the perfect or the aorist and its detailed elaboration by –aux-forms—is quite regular (cf. Sonnenhauser 2012; 2014b).

- (20) V “Imennik na bălgarskite xanove” piše, če bălgarite *sa imali* svoja dăržava v Evropa 515 godini predi Asparuxovite bălgari da preminat Dunava (680g.). Tekstăt glasi “Tezi pet knjaze upravljavaxa ottatāk Dunava petstotin [...]”.
 (http://veso1985.log.bg/article.php?article_id=17025, 27.12.09)
 ‘The ‘directory of the Bulgarian Khans’ writes that the Bulgarians *have had* their state in Europe 515 years before Asparux’s Bulgarians crossed the Danube (in 680). The texts says: “Those five rulers reigned on the other side of the Danube.”’

In (21), the –aux-forms anchor the reported speech content not to the narrator, but to the subject of the respective matrix clause. This is B.C. for *tvărđjal* ‘claimed’, and *toj* ‘he’ (not co-referent with B.C.) for *presledval* ‘followed’, *gonil* ‘chased’, *presledval* ‘followed’ and *predupredal* ‘warned’. That this is a literal report of the words of *toj* is indicated by B.C.’s reinforcing usage of *zabeležete* ‘note’:

- (21) Toj samijat *tvărđjal*, če me *presledval*, *zabeležete*—ne *gonil*, a *presledval*, za da me *predupredal* da ne piša za M.I., če e živ, razkazva ošte B.C. (www.standartnews.com, 15.11.09)
 ‘He himself claimed that he has *followed* me, note—not *chased*, but *followed* me, in order to *warn* me not to write about M.I. that he is alive, B.C. told further.’

As has been shown by the examples (18)–(21), distance and point of view (narrator, non-narrator, character) as introduced by the *l*-forms serve the perspectival structuring of the text into narrator’s and non-narrator’s / character’s text. Moreover, these examples have illustrated that for the usage of *l*-forms on the text level the question as to a renarrative, conclusive, perfect etc. interpretation may be irrelevant. All these interpretations emerge from the basic function of introducing a point of view and the concomitant anchoring of information, which is based on the distancing involved in *l*-forms.

5.2 Discourse mode

Another functional aspect that can be explained in terms of the analysis proposed in this paper concerns restrictions on the interpretation of the *l*-forms imposed at the level of discourse. Not all interpretations are equally possible and equally probable in all discourse modes.

As regards discourse modes, Paducheva's (2011) distinction into 'dialogical mode' and 'narrative mode' is most relevant for the present purposes. Both modes are distinguished by the type of communicative situation involved: the dialogical mode constitutes a 'prototypical' communicative situation with all interlocutors being present at the same time and place, whereas non-canonical discourse situations, such as the narrative mode, do not exhibit this coincidence. This distinction is important mainly for deictic and egocentric elements, which include the reference to some origo in their semantics. Egocentric elements can be further grouped into those that can be used in both discourse modes alike, without a change in interpretation, and those that cannot.

For the *l*-forms this is interesting insofar, as not all interpretations are equally possible in the narrative mode: admirative and irony seem restricted to the dialogical mode. Typical examples are given in (22): for *si bil* 'lit: you have been' in (22a) an admirative interpretation is most probable, while *sām bil bezmozāčen* 'lit: I have been brainless' in (22b) is to be understood ironically:

- (22) a. — A be, Toško, ti li *si bil*?—izvika toj—što šteš tuk v blatoto?
(Angel Karalijčev, *Toško Afrikanski*)
— 'Ah, Toško, *is it you?*—he shouted—what are you doing here in the swamp?'
b. B: Imajte milost, spasete me to nego! Ima lud! Lud v stajata!
Skačva v krevata!
A: Ti si bezmozāčen, be!
V: A-xā, az *sām bil bezmozāčen*?
A: Da!
V: Ami, togava ti kakāv si?
A: Ne pitame za mene, a za tebe! (Hinrichs et al. 2000, 52)
'B: Mercy, save me from him! There is a lunatic! A lunatic in the room!
A: You are brainless, man!
B: Aha, *I am brainless*?
A: Yes!
B: But, what are you then?
A: We are not asking about me, but about you!'

The preference of admirative and irony for the dialogical mode can also be seen (23): both examples can have an admirative and an ironic interpretation, while the other possibilities are far less likely:

- (23) a. Toj *imal* talant! (self-constructed example)
 ‘Oh, he has got talent... [ironical undertone] / He has talent!
 [I had not known that before]’
 b. I ženite *moželi* da karat!
 (<http://vbox7.com/play:d446c0c4b5>, 21.4.2014)
 ‘Women *can* drive as well!’

Restrictions on the occurrence of the admirative interpretation are noted also by Nicolova (2006, 43), who points out that the admirative is used in spoken language only. According to the analysis proposed here this restriction is not so much due to ‘spoken’ language, but rather to the dialogical mode. This is evident also from the fact that both interpretations are easily possible for first and second person *I*-forms, cf. (24), which may be an admirative or ironic comment on Baj Ganjo’s deliberate not paying for his beer:

- (24) “Ami ti, ot bǎrzane, *zabrazil* si da zaplatiš birata si, baj Ganjo”
 (Aleko Konstantinov, Baj Ganjo)
 ‘Well yes, being in a hurry, you *have forgotten* to pay for your beer, Baj Ganjo.’

Renarrative and conclusive interpretations for 1st and 2nd person *I*-forms are much harder to find than admirative and ironic ones. Some of the rare examples of 1st and 2nd person renarrative are given in (25):

- (25) a. Znaete li, dokato si xodex po ulicata, edni momčeta dojdoxa kǎm men i me poglednaxa šokirani: „Gaza? No kak, vǎv vestnicite piše, če *si umrjal*?!”
 (<http://www.7sport.net>, 9.10.2011)
 ‘You know, while I was walking along the street, some boys came up to me and looked at me, shocked: “Gaza? We don’t believe it, the newspaper says that *you have died*?!”’
 b. Pol Gaskojn: V bolnicata mi kazaxa, če *sǎm umrjal* dva pǎti.
 (<http://www.7sport.net>, 9.10.2011)
 ‘Paul Gascoigne: I was told in the hospital that *I have died* twice.’

These restrictions can be explained as follows: the splitting of roles within the observer into narrator and non-narrator (cf. section 4.2) with admirative and irony is much easier to solve in the dialogical mode with an actual speaking instance being present. This actual speaker serves as the secondary or higher-level observer that induces directionality on the

relation between narrator and non-narrator.

Due to the split within the observer and the introduction of a second-level observer, irony and admiring involve a component of meta-commentary. This makes these configurations belong to the interpretive instead of descriptive usage of language. An interpretively used utterance “is used to represent another representation (for instance, a possible or actual utterance or thought) that it resembles in content” (Wilson 2006, 1729). In order to understand these types of utterances, “the hearer must recognise that the speaker is thinking not directly about a state of affairs, but about another utterance or thought” (ibid.). As prime examples, Sperber and Wilson (1995, 259) list irony and exclamatives (hence, also admiratives), which “fall together as varieties of interpretive use”. The notion of distance as elaborated on in this paper allows this similarity of ironic and admiring usage of the *l*-forms to be captured and relates them to a more general field of linguistic research.

6. Conclusion

Using Bulgarian ‘*l*-forms’ as examples, this paper has elaborated on a semantic basis for the metaphor of ‘distance’. Thereby, this metaphor has turned out to be useful when accounting for the derivation of the various interpretations of the *l*-forms from a common semantic basis. This provides an alternative to the highly problematic paradigm-based approach, which regards all the possible interpretations as belonging to different, strictly separated paradigms. Furthermore, the notion of ‘distance’ has proven helpful in accounting for and systematizing the usage patterns the *l*-forms display on the text level. ‘Distance’ is thus not only a convenient metaphor in the domain of semantics and interpretation. Its functional relevance reaches beyond that in that it provides the basis for a description of point of view phenomena as well.

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